

# **DRAFT**

## **Transportation Planning PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)**



### **Tehama County Transportation Commission**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

It is the general policy of the Tehama County Transportation Commission (TCTC) to be inclusive and allow participation in the planning process by anyone who expresses an interest. This document describes the procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes that TCTC will use to promote participation by all interested parties in the transportation planning process. A documented participation plan is required by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, also known as “SAFETEA-LU,” and its implementing regulations (23 CFR, Section 450.316).



Participation by citizens, affected public agencies, community groups, and other interested parties is an important part of successful implementation of any public planning program or project. It would be difficult to develop a program that effectively meets the needs of the public without the participation of local citizens. TCTC actively encourages the participation of all interested parties in its planning efforts pursuant to this Public Participation Plan (PPP), which is designed to accomplish the following:

- 1) Inform and educate citizens and other interested parties about the TCTC’s ongoing transportation planning activities; and
- 2) Provide reasonable opportunities for citizens, affected public agencies, and all interested parties to be involved in the transportation planning process in Tehama County; and
- 3) Comply with the participation requirements of SAFETEA-LU.

The purpose of this document is to provide a clear directive for the public participation activities undertaken by TCTC, particularly as they pertain to the Agency’s primary responsibilities, which include development and implementation of the following:

- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)
- Annual Overall Work Program (OWP)
- Administration of Transit Development Act (TDA) funds
- Federal and state grant programs
- Bond programs

- Coordinated Human Transportation Plan
- Transit studies
- Area transportation plans
- Blueprint planning
- Special projects

Note: Section references are from Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

## **2. OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND POLICIES**

TCTC shall provide all interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process consistent with the following objectives (desired outcomes), strategies, and policies.

**Objective 1: Raise the level of understanding of the transportation planning process in Tehama County and identify how all interested parties can become involved.**



- Strategy 1.1: Produce plans and programs in a user-friendly, non-technical format that is easily understood by the general population.
- Strategy 1.2: Employ visualization techniques to describe plans and programs, where appropriate. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(iii))
- Strategy 1.3: When appropriate, TCTC shall produce a special newsletter specifically oriented to major plans or programs.
- Strategy 1.4: Maintain the TCTC website to provide useful information concerning current and future TCTC planning activities. Also, establish and maintain websites for specific programs, such as blueprint planning program and the Fix 5 Partnership program.
- Strategy 1.5: Maintain a page on the TCTC website that provides links to transportation-related information of interest to youth.
- Strategy 1.6: Seek public speaking opportunities during the development of major planning initiatives.
- Strategy 1.7: Encourage local media to cover projects and issues that are relevant and of interest to the public by providing meeting notices, agendas, press releases, and meeting with editorial boards.
- Strategy 1.8: Work to enhance public participation by using tools such as visioning software and audience polling technology.

**Objective 2: Provide all interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process.**

- Strategy 2.1: Provide adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on plans and programs. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(i))
- Strategy 2.2: Encourage early involvement by providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation planning issues and processes. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(ii))
- Strategy 2.3: Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(v))
- Strategy 2.4: Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as the elderly, low-income, and minority households. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(vii))
- Strategy 2.5: Utilize citizen-based task forces or committees to address issues relative to the RTP.
- Strategy 2.6: Evaluate plans and programs to determine the appropriate public participation strategies needed to encourage effective participation by all interested parties.
- Strategy 2.7: When selecting potential locations for community outreach activities, prioritize those that are served by means of alternative transportation, particularly public transit.
- Strategy 2.8: Provide details on how to obtain transit information (such as routes and schedules serving the community outreach location) in materials announcing the meetings.
- Strategy 2.9: Utilize advisory committees to gather technical expertise and citizen input regarding the development of plans and programs.
- Strategy 2.10: Ensure that representation on the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) is reflective of the different segments of Tehama County's population.
- Strategy 2.11: When appropriate, conduct opinion surveys to help identify the needs and interests of the affected population(s).
- Strategy 2.12: Provide copies of draft planning documents to affected local, state, and federal agencies and tribal governments for their review and comment.

- Strategy 2.13: Make TCTC documents available for public review at selected locations throughout the county, such as public libraries and government centers.
- Strategy 2.14: Utilize the TCTC website to make public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in an electronically accessible format and means. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(iv))
- Strategy 2.15: Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of plans and programs. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(vi))
- Strategy 2.16: Provide an additional opportunity to comment if the proposed final RTP or RTIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment, and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(viii))
- Strategy 2.17: In developing the RTP and RTIP, TCTC shall consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within Tehama County that are affected by transportation (including state and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, the RTP and RTIP shall be developed with due consideration of other related planning activities within Tehama County, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services that are provided by:
- (1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 USC Chapter 53 (Mass Transportation);
  - (2) Government agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive federal assistance from a source other than the US Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency services; and
  - (3) Recipients of assistance under 23 USC 204 (Federal Lands Highway Program). (Section 450.316(3)(b))
- Strategy 2.18: In developing the RTP and RTIP, TCTC shall appropriately involve Indian tribal governments. (Section 450.316(3)(c))
- Strategy 2.19: In developing the RTP and RTIP, TCTC shall appropriately involve federal land management agencies. (Section 450.316(3)(d))

Strategy 2.20: Attempt to offer information in alternative languages when appropriate or requested.

**Objective 3: Maintain contact with interested citizens and key stakeholders throughout the process of developing TCTC plans and projects.**

Strategy 3.1: Maintain a mailing list of interested parties for distribution of public participation materials, such as newsletters and draft documents.

Strategy 3.2: Identify key individuals representing groups or organizations most directly affected by a TCTC-sponsored project or program, and initiate correspondence with them, as deemed appropriate.

Strategy 3.3: Coordinate with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(ix))

**Objective 4: Consider the needs of those traditionally under-served by existing transportation systems (such as elderly, low-income, and minority households), who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.**

Strategy 4.1: Utilize input from the county's transportation disadvantaged community, including transportation providers and citizens, to identify opportunities to improve mobility for elderly, low-income, and minority households, and mentally or physically disabled persons.

Strategy 4.2: Conduct the annual "unmet transit needs" process. This process is specifically intended to identify unmet transit needs.

Strategy 4.3: Hold targeted community forums to solicit public input and to reach a better understanding of problems and challenges confronting the traditionally underserved population of Tehama County.

Strategy 4.5: Enhance access to the transportation planning process by selecting some meeting sites for public workshops or community forums that are more easily accessible to traditionally underserved communities.

Strategy 4.6: Monitor census and Title VI information to identify these populations and document their growth patterns in the region.

**Strategy 4.7: Rotate TCTC board meetings among all cities in the region.**

**Objective 5: Inform incoming TCTC board members, local commissioners, and council members regarding the TCTC's functions, responsibilities, and programs.**



Strategy 5.1: Participate in local commission/council meetings to present and discuss information, issues, and programs relating to TCTC and its responsibilities.

Strategy 5.2: Develop and maintain orientation manuals for new board members serving TCTC.

## **OPEN MEETING POLICY**

During the transportation planning process, TCTC and its advisory bodies shall hold open and public meetings in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code Section 54950 et seq).



## **PUBLIC WORKSHOP POLICY**

For certain high-profile projects, or where controversy is anticipated, TCTC may hold public workshops. The public and affected parties will be notified. The workshop format is designed to facilitate feedback and receive direction from attendees. Persons who attend workshops should be added to the mailing list for future meetings.

## **NOTIFICATION POLICY**

TCTC shall notify all interested parties and agencies that may be impacted by a plan or program of the opportunity to be involved in the transportation planning process. Notification shall be given, as appropriate, through legal notices, display ads, meeting announcements, public service announcements, press releases, newsletters, special mailers, e-mail, the TCTC website, publications, and agendas for meetings.

## **3. ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

In addition to citizen participation and staff analysis to identify community needs, TCTC receives input and recommendations from two standing committees; various ad hoc, technical, and steering committees; and at workshops. These committees and workshops provide recommendations on various projects, plans, and policies. This process allows the TCTC Board to make informed decisions.

## **COMMITTEE COMPOSITION**

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).** The TAC consists of representatives from the City and County Public Works Departments, City Managers of Red Bluff, Corning, and Tehama, and a Caltrans representative, as described in the TCTC bylaws.

**Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC).** The SSTAC is a council appointed by TCTC, who represent various segments of transit users and social service providers. The members serve staggered three-year terms as outlined in the California Public Utilities Code (Section 99238). The SSTAC operates in accordance with bylaws approved by the SSTAC and TCTC.

**Ad Hoc Committees.** Ad hoc committees groups may be created to solicit input on specific transportation projects or programs from affected or interested parties that are not included in the TAC or SSTAC. These parties might include affected property owners, stakeholders, and other interested parties, as well as affected or interested local, state, or federal agencies and tribal governments. It is the general policy of TCTC to be inclusive and allow participation by anyone who expresses an interest. The composition of the working group for a particular project will be reviewed and approved by TCTC. Since different projects may require different participants, there may be more than one working group operating at any given time.



## **FUNCTION OF THE COMMITTEES**

The committees will function as the primary public participation advisory tools for TCTC. TCTC staff will provide technical expertise, mail information, take notes or minutes at meetings, and interact with the committee members. As advisory committees to TCTC, the committees must be available to meet at the discretion of TCTC and/or as required by law as outlined below:

- a)** TAC and ad hoc committees will meet as often as may be necessary to participate in the review process for transportation plans, programs, and studies. TAC meets at least once before every TCTC meeting to review agenda items and offer input prior to action by TCTC Board. They provide staff technical expertise and recommendations.
- b)** SSTAC is statutorily responsible (PUC Section 99238) for providing recommendations to TCTC on transit issues, including “unmet transit needs”.

## **4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TOOLS**

This section contains descriptions of public participation tools currently used by TCTC.

### **TCTC Websites**

The primary TCTC website, at <http://www.tehamacountypublicworks.ca.gov/Transportation>, provides information about TCTC bylaws, contact information, meeting agenda and minutes and public transit information. The site has expanded to include transportation plans and programs; local transportation studies; documents for public review and comment; and links to state and federal transportation program websites.

### **TCTC Master Contact List**

TCTC staff will develop and maintain a master list of all contacts, including public agencies, businesses, community groups, and members of the public. The list is used to establish and maintain a list of e-mail contacts for general communications, electronic meeting notifications, and announcements.

### **Legal Advertisements**

Legal notices are placed in the Redding Record Searchlight, the only local daily newspaper with general circulation. Notices are also placed in local weekly newspapers when projects are located in the newspaper's local area of circulation, or when regional issues are involved. Notices may advertise meetings, agendas, or public comment periods on proposed plans, programs, or documents.

Notices of public hearings are published at least 10 days before the date of the hearing, in accordance with the bylaws of TCTC.

### **Display Ads**

Display ads are used to promote meetings that are not regularly scheduled or agenda items that may be of wide public interest. They are used to reach a larger audience than those that typically read legal ads. Display ads may also be used to advertise public comment periods on proposed plans, programs, or documents.

### **Direct Mailings**

Direct mailings are used to announce upcoming meetings or activities to a targeted area or group of people. An area may be targeted for a direct mailing because of potential impacts from a project. Groups are targeted that may have an interest in a specific issue.

### **Press Releases**

Press releases are sent to local media (newspaper, television, and radio) to announce upcoming meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues being considered by TCTC or its committees.

**Project Workshops/Open-Houses**

These public meetings are generally open and informal, with project team members interacting with the public on a one-on-one basis. Short presentations may be given at these meetings. The purpose of project-specific meetings is to provide project information to the public and to solicit public comment.

**Small Group Meetings**

During projects such as planning studies, meetings are held with small groups that have an interest in the project. Meetings could be with homeowners or neighborhood associations, civic groups, special interest groups, or other groups of affected or interested parties.

**Public Hearings**

Public hearings are used to solicit public comments on a project or issue being considered by TCTC. Hearings provide a formal setting for citizens to provide comments to TCTC or another decision-making body.

**Posters and Flyers**

Posters and flyers are used to announce meetings and events and are distributed at public places, such as city halls, libraries, and community centers for display. The announcement may contain a brief description of the purpose of the meeting/event, the time(s) and location(s), and contact information. Posters and flyers may be used to reach a large audience that cannot be reached using direct mailings and/or newsletters.

**Telephone Surveys**

Telephone surveys may be used to gauge public opinion on certain issues. This tool has been used for the Fix 5 Partnership program.

**Radio and Television Ads**

Radio and television ads may be used to generate public interest and involvement.

**Availability of Plans and Documents**

Documents at all stages will be available for review by the public at the TCTC office and on the TCTC website. A copy of draft documents will also be made available at the following locations, as appropriate:

- Tehama County Libraries (Red Bluff, Corning, Los Molinos)
- Tehama County Administration Center
- Tehama County Public Works
- Tehama County Planning Department
- City Halls
- Post offices in rural communities

## **5. REVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

Adoption of the PPP, and any significant future updates, shall be advertised and made available for public review and comment for at least 45 days prior to adoption. Copies of the approved PPP shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for information purposes, and posted on the TCTC website. (Section 450.316(a)(3))

TCTC staff shall periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the PPP to ensure a full and open participation process. (Section 450.316(a)(1)(x))

## **6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The following performance indicators are proposed for an annual evaluation of the process.

### **a) Make the Public Aware:**

- Number of newspaper ads, public notices
- Number of press releases, public service announcements, and new articles

### **b) Give the Public the Opportunity to Participate**

- Number of TCTC public meetings and workshops sponsored
- Number and origin of participants at public meetings and workshops
- Number of hits to the TCTC website
- Number of comments received during the public comment period at TAC and TCTC meetings.

### **c) Make Information Clear/Improve Understanding**

- Mail-back comment cards in agency publications and at events. Comment cards would ask the public to provide feedback on purpose of the event, information presented, adequacy of materials and time allowed for discussion

### **d) Result of Public Input**

- Percentage of comments responded to within five working days
- Documents revisions to plans based on citizen input

### **e) How Should the Public Participation Process be Improved**

- Periodic public participation process surveys
- Updates to TCTC's PPP at least every three years